

MEDIA RELEASE

**Attention: News Director
For Immediate Release
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**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
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Western District of Kentucky**

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**TEXAS MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO CONSPIRACY TO
DISTRIBUTE MARIJUANA**

David L. Huber, United States Attorney for the Western District of Kentucky, announced today that on November 17, 2006, **ERASMO CASTILLO**, age 27, of Starr County, Texas, **pled guilty** today in United States District Court to conspiracy to distribute marijuana, in violation of Title 21, United States Code, Section 846, and to distribution of marijuana, in violation of Title 21, United States Code, Sections 841(a)(1) and 841(b)(1)(B)(vii).

On June 26, 2005, a commercial vehicle inspection in Hope, Arkansas revealed a semi loaded with broccoli was also carrying a large quantity of marijuana. DEA was notified and began surveillance of the semi and a trail vehicle. The vehicles went to a warehouse on Robards Lane in Louisville, where they were joined by two other vehicles. **Castillo** was indicted on July 20, 2005, after being arrested by DEA agents on June 27, 2005, at the warehouse on Robards Lane where a semi-trailer which had been under surveillance by DEA was being off-loaded by several men who were also arrested. Approximately 1700 pounds of marijuana was seized, hidden under a load of vegetables. The street value of the marijuana is estimated to be approximately \$7,000,000. None of the men arrested, including **Castillo**, were armed or resisted arrest.

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Castillo entered a plea of guilty to one count of conspiracy to distribute marijuana, in

violation of 21 U.S.C. § 846, and one count of possession of marijuana with intent to distribute, in violation of 21 U.S.C. § 841(a)(1). Because of the quantity of marijuana involved, **Castillo** faces a penalty of from 5 to 40 years imprisonment, a fine of not more than \$4,000,000, and a term of supervised release of at least 4 years.

The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Larry Fentress and was investigated by agents of the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and the Department of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).

The plea was entered before the Honorable Jennifer B. Coffman, Judge, United States District Court for the Western District of Kentucky.

Judge Coffman has ordered a presentence investigation. Sentencing should be scheduled in approximately ten to twelve weeks.

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